a domination by one contestant over the other in some particular theatre or part of the line; a definite gain of territory, considerable in proportion to the effort put forward and losses incurred; often a break-through and temporary disintegration of hostile defences and forces. While the battles on the Western Front—after the first few weeks of open warfare—had the character of a grim wrestle between forces that moved slowly back or forward and remained substantially intact and invincible, the great battles fought in the Eastern and South-Eastern areas of the struggle ended in one side or the other being thrown into confusion and driven back for leagues in headlong rout.

Part in them which

Difficulty of surprise in the West

It is interesting to note the extent to which the element of surprise played a determining part in these critical engagements. After the Marne, and when the badger tactics on both sides had been inaugurated and established, it was assumed that there would be no room for surprises on a great scale. The forces and resources of the respective combatants at any and every given point and time were known to their adversaries. Modern methods of observation and elucidation, aerial reconnaissance, trench raids, cross-examination of prisoners, highly developed systems of espionage, supplemented the other means of

acquiring information as to the movements of each army. There seemed therefore to be no opportunity left for either side to carry out any strategical designs of which the other would be unaware, and against which it would not have timely notice to prepare itself up to the limit of its military resources.